

**PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS PROGRAM**

**DEVELOPMENT GRANTS  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



**U.S. Department of Education  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Washington, D.C.  
May 2014**

## Public Comment Sought for New Preschool Development Grants Competition

Posted May 5, 2014

Thank you for your interest in the [Preschool Development Grants competition](#), which will be jointly administered by the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services (ED, HHS, or Departments). The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Appropriations Act) provides \$250 million for a new competition to support efforts to build, develop, and expand voluntary, high-quality preschool programs. Competition requirements, priorities, and selection criteria will be developed consistent with the language in the Appropriations Act and accompanying report language, which can be found [here](#).

The Preschool Development Grants competition will prepare more States to become ready to participate in the proposed [Preschool for All](#) program in the Department of Education's FY2015 budget request. Recent and longstanding research indicates that children who attend high-quality preschool programs achieve significant, positive short- and long-term outcomes, and the return on investment that results from attending high-quality preschool programs is overwhelmingly clear.<sup>1</sup> There is tremendous unmet need for high-quality early learning programs.<sup>2</sup> Only 40 percent of eligible children have access to Head Start.<sup>3</sup> Less than one-third of all four-year-olds are enrolled in State-funded preschool programs.<sup>4</sup>

States and communities are looking for ways to expand access to high-quality early learning opportunities. Last year, 30 governors from both parties increased funding for preschool in their State budgets.<sup>5</sup> Preschool Development Grants can help States and communities meet their goals and the needs of families and children.

All States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico will be eligible to apply, if they wish, for one of two proposed types of discretionary grants: **Development Grants** and **Expansion Grants**. States with small or no State-funded preschool programs will be eligible to apply for Development Grants. States that have more robust State-funded preschool programs *or* that have been awarded a Race to the Top – Early Learning

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Services Policy, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, The Short- and Long-Term Impacts of Large Public Early Care and Education Programs (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014), available at: [http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/14/longtermimpact/rb\\_longtermimpact.cfm](http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/14/longtermimpact/rb_longtermimpact.cfm)

<sup>2</sup> Barnett, W. S., et al. (2012). The State of Preschool: 2012 State Preschool Yearbook. The National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers University. Available at: <http://nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/yearbook2012.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Source: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services estimations based on 2011 Census data and the 2013 Office of Head Start Program Information Report.

<sup>4</sup> Barnett, W. S., et al. (2012). The State of Preschool: 2012 State Preschool Yearbook. The National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers University. Available at: <http://nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/yearbook2012.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Workman, E. et. al., State Pre-K Funding 2013-14 Fiscal Year, January 2014. Education Commission of the States.

Challenge grant will be eligible to apply for Expansion Grants. We intend for high-quality preschool programs to be located in regionally diverse communities or consortia of communities in cities, towns, counties, neighborhood, districts, rural or tribal areas, with a high level of need or distress as determined by the State. Preschool programs funded under either category of the Preschool Development Grants will need to meet the competition's criteria for high-quality preschool programs. Other preschool programs within the State will not be required to meet these criteria.

In order to run a rigorous competition and obligate funds to grantees before the December 31, 2014, statutory deadline, we will waive rulemaking for this new program, pursuant to authority in section 1232(d)(1) of the General Education Provisions Act. However, we are interested in your input on major elements of the program, and already have received [over five hundred comments on our Web site](#) pertaining to the new competition.

We have considered these ideas, suggestions, and comments in developing the *draft* requirements, priorities, selection criteria, and definitions in the executive summary for each of the **Development Grants** competition and the **Expansion Grants** competition, which are now posted for review and comment by the public. In commenting on these documents, we encourage potential applicants to identify potential barriers and challenges that may impede implementation of an ambitious and achievable, high-quality State plan.

These documents will be posted for public input until 5:00 PM EDT on Wednesday, May 16, 2014, at which time the input section will be closed and we will begin considering comments received as we develop final requirements, priorities, selection criteria, and definitions. We will also be holding a webinar to review the executive summaries. Further information will be posted on the [Preschool Development Grant](#) Web page. We will publish these requirements, priorities, selection criteria, and definitions in a notice inviting applications in the Federal Register later this summer.

This is a moderated site; all comments will be reviewed before they are posted. We reserve the right not to post comments that are unrelated to the Preschool Development Grants competition, are inconsistent with ED's Web site policies, are advertisements or endorsements, or are otherwise inappropriate. Please do not include links to advertisements or endorsements, as we will delete them before we post your comments. Additionally, to protect your privacy and the privacy of others, please do not include personally identifiable information such as Social Security numbers, addresses, phone numbers, or email addresses in the body of your comments as the comments will be publicly available for others to review. For more information, please be sure to read the "comments policy." We intend to post all responsive submissions on a timely basis.

Please understand that posts must be related to the Preschool Development Grants Program, and should be as specific as possible. If you include a link to additional information in your post, we urge you to ensure that the linked information is accessible to all individuals, including individuals with disabilities. Each post must be limited to 1,000 words. All opinions, ideas, suggestions, and comments are considered informal input and may or may not be reflected in the final Preschool Development Grants competition requirements, priorities, selection criteria, or definitions, established in the final Preschool Development Grants notice inviting applications. ED and HHS will not respond to any posts.

Again, thank you for your interest in this opportunity to support early learning. We look forward to hearing from you.

*Note to reader:* Defined terms are used throughout this document and are identified using initial capitalization. Definitions are provided later in the document.

[Department of Education's linking policy](#)

[Department of Education's disclaimer of endorsement](#)

Click the links below for [Development Grants Executive Summary](#) or [Expansion Grants Executive Summary](#) and download and read the executive summary. On the chosen Executive Summary page, click "Add a New Comment" at the bottom of the screen and add your comment. Please note that the Application Requirements, Program Requirements, and Definitions are the same for both Executive Summaries. In these and additional areas where the language is the same, you do not need to make your comments in each Executive Summary (Development Grants and Expansion Grants). Please indicate in your comments the area in which you are addressing.

### **Development Grants Executive Summary**

A Development Grant is to support a State with a small or no State-Funded Preschool Program to—

- Develop or enhance preschool program infrastructure and capacity to deliver High-Quality Preschool Programs; and
- Implement and sustain High-Quality Preschool Programs to reach and serve additional Eligible Children in one or more High-Need Communities.

### **Expansion Grants Executive Summary**

An Expansion Grant is to support a State with a State-Funded Preschool Program **OR** that has received a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant to—

- Implement and sustain High-Quality Preschool Programs to reach and serve additional Eligible Children in two or more High-Need Communities; and
- Enhance preschool program infrastructure and make quality improvements to deliver High-Quality Preschool Programs.

## DEVELOPMENT GRANTS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **Purpose**

The purpose of a Development grant is to support a State with a small or no State-Funded Preschool Program<sup>6</sup> to—

- (a) Develop or enhance preschool program infrastructure and capacity to deliver High-Quality Preschool Programs; and
- (b) Implement and sustain High-Quality Preschool Programs to reach and serve additional Eligible Children in one or more High-Need Communities.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

*A State must meet the following requirements to be eligible to compete for funding under this program:*

- (a) The State must—
  - (1) Serve less than 10% of Eligible Children in a State-Funded Preschool Program or not have a State-Funded Preschool Program;<sup>7</sup> and
  - (2) Not have received an award under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge competition.

Therefore, only the States of Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Puerto Rico, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming are eligible to apply for Development grants.

- (b) The Lead Agency must have executed with each Subgrantee a preliminary Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other binding agreement that the State must attach to its application, describing the Subgrantee's level of participation in the grant. At a minimum, the preliminary MOU or other binding agreement must include:
  - (1) An assurance that Subgrantees that are Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) will form strong partnerships with other Early Learning Providers, and Subgrantees that are Early Learning Providers will form strong partnerships with LEAs, in particular to ensure successful transitions for children from preschool to kindergarten;

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<sup>6</sup> Defined terms are capitalized throughout this document. See the “Definitions” section of the document.

<sup>7</sup> Based on current data from: Barnett, W. S., et al. (2012). The State of Preschool: 2012 State Preschool Yearbook. The National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers University. Available at: <http://nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/yearbook2012.pdf>. (Note: We may update which States are eligible for Development Grants if more current data are available by the time the notice inviting applications is published.)

- (2) An assurance that Subgrantees will use grant funds to implement High-Quality Preschool Programs, consistent with the definition;
- (3) The scopes of work referenced in paragraph (e) of the Application Requirements section; and
- (4) The information addressed in selection criterion (D)(4).

### **Award Information**

Amount of Funds Available: Approximately \$80 million for the first year of awards made in 2014.

Budget Requirements: To support States in planning their budgets, the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (ED, HHS, or Departments) have developed the following annual budget caps for each State eligible for a Development grant. We will not consider for funding an application from a State that proposes a budget in any year that exceeds the applicable cap set for that State. The Departments developed the following categories by ranking every State eligible for a Development grant according to its relative share of Eligible Children who could be served by Development grants and then identifying the natural breaks in the rank order. Then, based on population, budget caps were developed for each category.

Category 1 – up to \$20M – Arizona, Indiana  
 Category 2 – up to \$17.5M – Alabama, Missouri, Puerto Rico  
 Category 3 – up to \$15M – Mississippi, Utah, Nevada, Idaho  
 Category 4 – up to \$10M – Montana, Hawaii, South Dakota, Alaska, New Hampshire  
 Category 5 – up to \$5M – Wyoming, North Dakota

Project Period: Up to 48 months.

Budget Periods and Continuation Grants: Grants awarded under this competition may be for a project period of up to four years. Depending on the availability of funds, the Departments will make continuation awards for years two, three, and four of the project period in accordance with section 75.253 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) (34 CFR 75.253). However, to ensure that continuation funds will be used only for high-quality and effective projects, in determining whether or not to award continuation grants for years two, three, and four, the Departments will also consider if the grantee is achieving the intended outcomes of the grant and shows evidence of the following critical goals and activities:

- (a) Demonstration of progress in the creation, expansion, or establishment of High-Quality Preschool Programs in the designated High-Need Community or Communities to be served by the Subgrantees, including the program infrastructure needed to ensure the delivery of High-Quality Preschool Programs to participating Eligible Children;

- (b) Demonstration that the State is holding each of its Subgrantees accountable for fully adhering to all the program quality components that are part of the definition of a High-Quality Preschool Program;
- (c) Demonstration of coordination of Federal and State funds and programs to support a coherent approach to effective High-Quality Preschool Programs;
- (d) Demonstration that the State has provided high-quality technical assistance to the Subgrantees and is implementing a rigorous monitoring process to ensure the delivery of High-Quality Preschool Programs;
- (e) Demonstration that the State collects, analyzes, and uses high-quality and timely data, especially on Subgrantee program quality, school readiness of Eligible Children in High-Quality Preschool Programs, and student progress through third grade; and
- (f) Demonstration of improvement on the program performance measures, to the extent such data is available.

#### **Application Requirements**

*Each application must meet the following application requirements:*

- (a) The State's application must be signed by the Governor or an authorized representative; an authorized representative from the Lead Agency; and an authorized representative from each Subgrantee.
- (b) The application must include a letter of support from an operational State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care that meets the requirements described in section 642B(b) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837(b)) and as described in paragraph (k) of the Program Requirements. This letter must describe the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care's level of support and, if applicable, participation in the grant.
- (c) The State must complete the budget spreadsheets that are provided in the application package and submit the completed spreadsheet as part of its application. These spreadsheets should be included on the CD or DVD that the State submits as its application.
- (d) The State must include a budget that details how it will use Federal grant funds awarded under this competition, and funds from other Federal, State, private, and local sources to achieve—
  - (1) The goals outlined in its ambitious and achievable plan; and
  - (2) Its ambitious and achievable targets for increasing the number and percentage of Eligible Children who are enrolled in High-Quality Preschool Programs under this grant.



- (e) The State must submit preliminary scopes of work for the State and each Subgrantee as part of the executed MOU or other binding agreement. Each preliminary scope of work must describe the portions of the State's ambitious and achievable plans that the Subgrantees are agreeing to implement. If a State is awarded a grant, the State will have up to 90 days to submit final scopes of work for the State and each Subgrantee.
- (f) The State must provide, for each selection criterion or priority in this notice that solicits an ambitious and achievable plan, a description of the following elements, at a minimum—
  - (1) The key goals;
  - (2) The key activities to be undertaken; the rationale for the activities; and, if applicable, where in the State the activities will be initially implemented, and where and how they will be scaled up over time;
  - (3) A realistic timeline, including key milestones, for implementing each key activity;
  - (4) The party or parties responsible for implementing each activity and other key personnel assigned to each activity;
  - (5) Appropriate financial resources to support successful implementation of the ambitious and achievable plan;
  - (6) The information requested as supporting evidence, if any, together with any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers in judging the credibility of the ambitious and achievable plan;
  - (7) The information requested in the performance measures, where applicable; and
  - (8) How the State will address the needs of Eligible Children, including those who may be in need of additional supports, such as children who have disabilities or developmental delays; who are English learners; who reside on “Indian lands” as that term is defined by section 8013(7) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) (ESEA); who are migrant, homeless, or in foster care; who reside in rural areas; who are from military families; and other children as identified by the State, if applicable.

## **Priorities**

### **Absolute Priority**

*A State must address the absolute priority in its application in order to receive an award. States do not write directly to the absolute priority; instead, reviewers determine if the priority is met after evaluating a State's response to all of the Selection Criteria. We consider for funding only applications that meet the absolute priority. A State meets the absolute priority if a majority of reviewers determines that the State has met the absolute priority.*

### **Priority 1: Absolute Priority – Building a High-Quality Preschool Program**

To meet this priority, the State's application must demonstrate how it will increase

access to High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children by having an ambitious and achievable plan to—

- (1) Develop or enhance State-Funded Preschool Program infrastructure and capacity to deliver High-Quality Preschool Programs; and
- (2) No later than year four of the grant period, if not in earlier years—
  - (a) Subgrant at least 90% of its Federal grant award to a Subgrantee or Subgrantees to implement and sustain High-Quality Preschool Programs to reach and serve additional Eligible Children in one or more High-Need Communities; and
  - (b) Use no more than 10% of its Federal grant award for preschool program infrastructure and quality improvements such as those for activities described in selection criteria (C)(1).

#### Competitive Preference Priorities

*Competitive preference priorities can earn the applicant extra or “competitive preference” points.*

#### Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority – Contributing Matching Funds

The State meets this priority based on the extent to which it submits an ambitious and achievable plan showing how the State will contribute non-Federal matching funds for its ambitious and achievable plan during the life of the grant. Matching funds may be comprised of State, local, and philanthropic funds and include increased State funding appropriated beginning in fiscal year 2014. An applicant that matches 50% or more of its projected four-year total award amount will receive the maximum amount of points, and an applicant that matches less than 50% of its projected four-year total award amount will receive points based on a sliding scale.

#### Priority 3: Competitive Preference Priority – Supporting a Continuum of Early Learning and Development

To receive a competitive preference under this priority, the State must demonstrate how it will integrate High-Quality Preschool Programs within a broader continuum of high-quality care and education supports for the Eligible Children participating in the State’s ambitious and achievable plan from birth through third grade, including full-day kindergarten. In particular, the State must address how it will implement a seamless progression of supports and interventions for, at a minimum, a defined cohort of Eligible Children within each High-Need Community served by the Subgrantees. The State must describe how it will foster partnerships and leverage resources from existing community agencies that provide early childhood services—including early intervention, Early Head Start and Head Start, home visiting, child care, and preschool programs. The State must also describe how it will ensure smooth transitions for children and families, particularly the transition from infant and toddler services to preschool services, including the transition of services under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.) to services under section 619 of Part B of IDEA.

**Priority 4: Competitive Priority – Addressing the Needs of Children in Promise Zones**

To receive a competitive preference under this priority, applicants must propose projects that are designed to serve and coordinate with a federally designated Promise Zone. (For additional information on Promise Zones, see [www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/01/08/fact-sheet-president-obama-s-promise-zones-initiative](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/01/08/fact-sheet-president-obama-s-promise-zones-initiative).)

**Selection Criteria**

*States must address in their application all of the selection criteria.*

**A. Executive Summary**

The extent to which the State includes an ambitious and achievable plan for expanding access to High-Quality Preschool Programs that clearly articulates how the plans proposed under each criterion in this section, when taken together, will effectively—

- (1) Build on the State's progress to date as demonstrated in selection criterion (B);
- (2) Provide new, expanded, or enhanced High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children through a subgrant or subgrants to serve one or more High-Need Communities;
- (3) Address the structural elements specified in the definition of High-Quality Preschool Programs;
- (4) Set expectations for the school readiness of Eligible Children upon kindergarten entry;
- (5) Be supported by a broad group of stakeholders, including Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and, if applicable, State and local early learning councils;
- (6) Set goals for the number and percentage of Eligible Children that will be served during each year of the grant; and
- (7) Allocate funds between—
  - (a) Activities to build or enhance State-Funded Preschool Program infrastructure, including but not limited to Program Standards, teacher licensure and professional development, program monitoring, evaluation, and other activities that would enable the delivery of High-Quality Preschool Programs to children; and
  - (b) Subgrants to Early Learning Providers to implement High-Quality Preschool Programs to reach and serve additional Eligible Children in targeted High-Need Communities, including how it will subgrant at least 90% of its Federal

grant award to the Subgrantees no later than year four of the grant period, if not in earlier years.

## **B. Commitment to High-Quality Preschool Programs**

The extent to which the State demonstrates its commitment to develop or enhance the State-Funded Preschool Program infrastructure and its capacity to both deliver and increase access to High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children, as evidenced by—

- (1) State Early Learning and Development Standards;
- (2) The State's financial investment, if any, and number of children, including Eligible Children, served in State-Funded Preschool Programs over the last four years, including the amount of these investments in relation to the size of the State's population of Eligible Children during this same time period;
- (3) Pending and enacted legislation, policies, and/or practices, which demonstrate the State's current and future commitment to increasing access to High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children;
- (4) The quality of existing early learning programs that receive State funding, including any State-Funded Preschool Programs, if applicable, as evidenced by policies and program data that demonstrate the State's commitment to: the components of a High-Quality Preschool Program; complying with Program Standards; and providing support for program monitoring and improvement, which may be accomplished through the use of a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS); and
- (5) The State's coordination of preschool programs and services, in partnership with its Early Learning Advisory Council, with other State and Federal resources that may be used to serve preschool-aged children including, if applicable, programs and services supported by Title I of the ESEA, Part C and Part B, Section 619 of IDEA, the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.).

## **C. Ensuring Quality in Preschool Programs**

The extent to which the State has an ambitious and achievable plan to ensure program quality, including a description of how the State will—

- (1) Use funds received under this grant for program infrastructure and quality improvements at the State level through activities such as—
  - (a) Enhancing or expanding Early Learning and Development Standards;

- (b) Implementing Program Standards consistent with a High-Quality Preschool Program;
  - (c) Conducting a needs assessment to determine available program resources;
  - (d) Establishing or upgrading preschool teacher education and licensure requirements;
  - (e) Improving teacher training programs;
  - (f) Improving professional development programs and practices;
  - (g) Linking preschool and elementary and secondary school data;
  - (h) Monitoring and evaluating preschool programs such as through the use of a TQRIS;
  - (i) Implementing a Comprehensive Early Learning Assessment System and
  - (j) Other activities that would enable the delivery of High-Quality Preschool Programs to Eligible Children; and
- (2) Implement a system for monitoring the Subgrantees that are receiving funds under this grant to ensure they are implementing High-Quality Preschool Program(s) and complying with Program Standards, which may be accomplished through the use of a TQRIS, including the extent to which the State—
- (a) Has the capacity to measure preschool quality and provide performance feedback to drive continuous program improvement;
  - (b) Is using a Statewide Longitudinal Data System that is able to track student progress from preschool through third grade; and
  - (c) Clearly specifies the measureable outcomes, including school readiness, to be achieved by the program.

#### **D. Collaborating with Subgrantees**

The extent to which the State articulates an ambitious and achievable plan for expanding High-Quality Preschool Programs through the clearly identified and committed Subgrantees, including a description of how—

- (1) The State selected each identified Subgrantee and the High-Need Community or Communities that will be served by the Subgrantee, including a description of each, their geographic diversity, including rural and tribal areas, if any, and how the State will subgrant its Federal grant award, including at least 90% of its Federal grant award in the fourth year, or earlier, to the Subgrantees in order to implement and sustain High-Quality Preschool Programs to reach and serve additional Eligible Children in one or more High-Need Communities;
- (2) The Subgrantees will integrate, to the extent practicable, High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children within economically diverse, inclusive settings,

including those that serve children from families with incomes above 200% of the Federal poverty line;<sup>8</sup>

- (3) The Subgrantees will deliver High-Quality Preschool Programs to Eligible Children, including Eligible Children who may be in need of additional supports, such as those who have disabilities or developmental delays; who are English learners; who reside on “Indian lands” as that term is defined by section 8013(7) of the ESEA; who are migrant, homeless, or in foster care; who reside in rural or tribal areas; who are from military families; and other children as identified by the State;
- (4) The State will ensure that the Subgrantees are committed to the effective implementation of High-Quality Preschool Programs, as evidenced through a preliminary MOU or other binding agreement between the State and each Subgrantee, that outlines—
  - (a) The roles and responsibilities of the State and Subgrantee in implementing the project plan;
  - (b) How Subgrantees that are LEAs will form strong partnerships with Early Learning Providers, and how Subgrantees that are Early Learning Providers will form strong partnerships with LEAs, in particular to ensure successful transitions for children from preschool to kindergarten;
  - (c) The amount of resources that will be provided by the State and the Subgrantee, if applicable, for implementation of the program;
  - (d) How the Subgrantee will minimize local administrative costs;
  - (e) How High-Quality Preschool Programs will be implemented, including the organizational capacity and existing infrastructure of the Subgrantee to provide High-Quality Preschool Programs, either directly or indirectly through an Early Learning Provider or Providers, and coordinate the delivery of High-Quality Preschool Programs;
  - (f) The number and percentage of Eligible Children that will be served during each year of the grant;
  - (g) How the State and Subgrantee will monitor the Early Learning Providers to ensure they are delivering High-Quality Preschool Programs;
  - (h) The method and process for making different types of decisions (e.g., policy, operational); and
  - (i) How the State and Subgrantee will coordinate, but not supplant, the delivery of High-Quality Preschool Programs funded under this grant with existing services for preschool-aged children including, if applicable, programs and services supported through Title I of the ESEA, Part C and Part B, Section 619 of IDEA, the Head Start Act, and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act; and

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<sup>8</sup> Note that under the provisions of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014, Development grant funds may only be used to serve Eligible Children.

- (5) The State, in coordination with the Subgrantees, plans to sustain High-Quality Preschool Programs after the grant period, including any non-Federal support that the State or Subgrantee plans to contribute.

### **E. Strong Partnerships between Subgrantees and LEAs or other Early Learning Providers**

The extent to which the State has an ambitious and achievable plan to ensure strong partnerships between Subgrantees and LEAs or other Early Learning Providers, as appropriate, including a description of how the State will ensure that each Subgrantee—

- (1) Partners with LEAs or other Early Learning Providers, as appropriate, to carry out activities that will provide children with successful transitions from preschool into kindergarten; and
- (2) Coordinates and collaborates with LEAs or other Early Learning Providers, as appropriate, in—
  - (a) Providing opportunities for early educators to participate in professional development on early learning and kindergarten standards, assessments, and curricula;
  - (b) Providing family engagement, support, nutrition, and other comprehensive services;
  - (c) Supporting full inclusion of children with disabilities;
  - (d) Ensuring that High-Quality Preschool Programs have sufficient facilities to meet the needs of Eligible Children;
  - (e) Developing and implementing a systematic procedure for sharing data and other records, transferred with parental consent and consistent with Federal and State law; and
  - (f) Utilizing community-based learning resources, such as libraries, arts and arts education programs, and family literacy programs.

### **F. Alignment within a Birth through Third Grade Continuum**

The extent to which the State has an ambitious and achievable plan to align High-Quality Preschool Programs supported under this grant with programs that serve children from birth through age five and in kindergarten through third grade.

- (1) For birth through age five programs, these activities include—
  - (a) Coordinating with other early education and care programs supported through Federal, State, and local resources to build a strong continuum of learning for children from birth through age five; and
  - (b) Ensuring that the provision of High-Quality Preschool Programs will not lead to a diminution of other services for programs serving children from birth through age 5; and

(2) For kindergarten through third grade, these activities include—

- (a) Ensuring that Eligible Children are well prepared for kindergarten;
- (b) Sustaining the educational and developmental gains of Eligible Children upon kindergarten entry from High-Quality Preschool Programs throughout the early elementary school years; and
- (c) Taking steps, or building upon the steps it has taken, to align, at a minimum:
  - (i) Child learning standards and expectations;
  - (ii) Teacher preparation, credentials, and workforce competencies;
  - (iii) Comprehensive Early Learning Assessment Systems; and
  - (iv) Data systems.

### **G. Budget and Sustainability**

The extent to which the budget narrative and budget tables demonstrate that the State will—

- (1) Coordinate the uses of existing funds that support early learning and development from Federal sources, such as Title I of the ESEA, Section 619, Part B and Part C, of IDEA, the Head Start Act, and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and State, private, local, foundation or other private funding sources for activities and services that help expand High-Quality Preschool Programs;
- (2) Use the funds from this grant and any matching contributions to expand High-Quality Preschool Programs, including using projected costs (e.g., per child costs, where appropriate) that are reasonable and sufficient to ensure High-Quality Preschool Programs; and using the funds to serve the number of children described in its ambitious and achievable plan each year; and
- (3) Sustain the High-Quality Preschool Programs provided by this grant after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Eligible Children with access to High-Quality Preschool Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

### **Program Requirements**

*A State and Subgrantees, as appropriate, that receive funds under this grant must meet the following requirements:*

- (a) The State must continue to participate in (i) the programs authorized by Section 619, Part B and Part C, of IDEA, (ii) the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program (pursuant to the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.), Section 418 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 618), and (iii) the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program (authorized under section 511 of Title V of the Social Security Act, as amended



by Section 2951 of the Affordable Care Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-148)), for the duration of the grant.

- (b) The State must participate in grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS, individually or in collaboration with other State grantees, to share effective program practices and solutions and collaboratively solve problems, and must set aside \$50,000 annually from its grant funds for this purpose.
- (c) The State must participate in any evaluation of the State's High-Quality Preschool Program, including participating with a consortium of States in a cross-State evaluation, if funded by ED or HHS.
- (d) The State must comply with the requirements of all applicable Federal, State, and local privacy laws, including the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g), the Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (Pub. L. 104-191), and IDEA, and their applicable regulations.
- (e) The State and its Subgrantees must ensure that the grant project is implemented in accordance with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws.
- (f) The State must provide researchers with access, consistent with the requirements of all applicable Federal, State, and local privacy laws, to available data regarding the enrollment and school readiness of Eligible Children in State-Funded Preschool Programs.
- (g) Unless otherwise protected by Federal or State laws or a specific written agreement as proprietary information, the State must make any work (e.g., materials, tools, processes, systems) developed under its grant freely available to the public. Any Web sites developed under this grant must meet government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility.
- (h) The State must have a State Longitudinal Data System that links early childhood data with the State's K-12 data system.
- (i) The State must submit final scopes of work for the State and each Subgrantee within 90 days of the grant award notification date. These final scopes of work must contain detailed work plans that are consistent with the corresponding preliminary scopes of work and with the State's grant application, and must include the State's and each Subgrantee's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures for the portions of the State's proposed plans that the Subgrantee is agreeing to implement.
- (j) Funds made available under this grant must be used to supplement, not supplant, any Federal, State, or local funds (e.g., IDEA, Title I, Head Start, CCDF, and any State match) that, in the absence of the funds awarded under

this grant, would be available for improving the quality of State-Funded Preschool Programs and increasing access to High-Quality Preschool Programs.

- (k) The State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care must include the State's CCDF administrator, State agency coordinators from both Part B, section 619, and Part C of IDEA, and State agency representatives responsible for health and mental health.
- (l) The State must ensure that the percentage of children with disabilities served in the High-Quality Preschool Programs reflects, at minimum, the percentage of 4-year-old children served statewide through Part B, Section 619 of IDEA, as a percentage of the population.

### **Definitions**

Comprehensive Services means services that include, at a minimum—

- (a) Screenings for vision, dental, health (including mental health), and development, as well as referrals and assistance obtaining services, when appropriate;
- (b) Family engagement opportunities (taking into account home language), such as parent conferences (including parent input about their child's development) and support services, such as parent education;
- (c) Nutrition services, including nutritious meals and snack options aligned with requirements set by the most recent Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines promulgated by the Department of Agriculture, as well as regular, age-appropriate, nutrition education for children and their families;
- (d) Services coordinated with LEAs and early intervention service providers and other entities providing services under section 619 and part C of IDEA;
- (e) Physical activity services aligned with evidence-based guidelines, such as those recommended by the Institute of Medicine, and which take into account and accommodate children with disabilities;
- (f) Additional support services determined by the State, as appropriate; and
- (g) On-site coordination, to the maximum extent feasible.

Comprehensive Early Learning Assessment System means a coordinated and comprehensive system of multiple assessments, each of which is valid and reliable for its specified purpose and for the population with which it will be used, that organizes information about the process and context of young children's learning and development in order to help teachers make informed instructional and programmatic decisions and that conforms with the recommendations of the National Research Council report on early childhood assessments<sup>9</sup> by including, at a minimum:

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<sup>9</sup> National Research Council. (2008). Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How. Committee on Developmental Outcomes and Assessments for Young Children, C.E. Snow and S.B. Van Hemel, Editors. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Board on Testing and Assessment, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. [www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=12446](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12446).

- (a) Screening Measures;
- (b) Formative Assessments;
- (c) Measures of Environmental Quality;
- (d) Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions; and
- (e) A Kindergarten Entry Assessment.

Early Learning and Development Standards means a set of expectations, guidelines, or developmental milestones that—

- (a) Describes what all children from birth to kindergarten entry should know and be able to do and their disposition toward learning;
- (b) Is appropriate for each age group (e.g., infants, toddlers, and preschoolers); for English learners; and for children with disabilities or developmental delays;
- (c) Covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness; and
- (d) Is universally designed and developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate.

Early Learning Intermediary Organization means a national, statewide, regional, or community-based organization that represents one or more networks of early learning and development programs in the State and that has influence or authority over them. Such Early Learning Intermediary Organizations include, but are not limited to, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies; State Head Start Associations; Family Child Care Associations; State affiliates of the National Association for the Education of Young Children; State affiliates of the Council for Exceptional Children's Division of Early Childhood; statewide or regional union affiliates that represent Early Childhood Educators; affiliates of the National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association; the National Tribal, American Indian, and Alaskan Native Head Start Association; and the National Indian Child Care Association.

Early Learning Provider means an entity that carries out an early childhood education program, including an LEA, charter school, educational service agency, Head Start program, licensed child care provider, municipality or other local government agency, tribes and Indian organizations, institution of higher education, and other eligible providers as defined by the State, or a consortium thereof.

Eligible Children means four-year-old children from families whose income is at or below 200 percent of the Federal poverty line.

Essential Data Elements means the critical child, program, and workforce data elements of a coordinated early learning data system, including—

- (a) A unique statewide child identifier or another highly accurate, proven method to link data on that child, including Kindergarten Entry Assessment data, to and from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and the coordinated early learning data system (if applicable);
- (b) A unique statewide early childhood educator identifier;
- (c) A unique program site identifier;
- (d) Child and family demographic information;

- (e) early childhood educator demographic information, including data on educational attainment and State credential or licenses held, as well as professional development information;
- (f) Program-level data on the program's structure, quality, child suspension and expulsion rates, staff retention, staff compensation, work environment, and all applicable data reported as part of the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
- (g) Child-level program participation and attendance data.

Essential Domains of School Readiness means the domains of language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development), approaches toward learning, physical well-being, and motor development (including adaptive skills), and social and emotional development.

Formative Assessment (also known as a classroom-based or ongoing assessment) means assessment questions, tools, and processes—

- (a) That are—
  - (1) Specifically designed to monitor children's progress in meeting the Early Learning and Development Standards;
  - (2) Valid and reliable for their intended purposes and their target populations; and
  - (3) Linked directly to the curriculum; and
- (b) The results of which are used to guide and improve instructional practices.

Full-day means a day that is—

- (a) Equivalent to a full school day at the public elementary schools in the State; and
- (b) Not fewer than 5 hours a day.

High-Need Community means a geographically defined area, such as a city, town, county, neighborhood, district, rural or tribal areas, or consortium thereof, with a high-level of need or distress as determined by the State.

High-Quality Preschool Program means an early learning program that includes structural elements that are evidence-based and nationally recognized (e.g., Head Start Program Performance Standards<sup>10</sup> or National Institute for Early Education Research<sup>11</sup>) as important for ensuring program quality, including at a minimum:

- (a) High staff qualifications, including a teacher with a bachelor degree in early childhood education or a bachelor degree in any field with a State-approved alternate pathway, which may include coursework, clinical practice, and evidence of knowledge of content and pedagogy relating to early childhood, and teaching assistants with appropriate credentials;

<sup>10</sup> <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/Head%20Start%20Requirements/45-cfr-chapter-xiii>.

<sup>11</sup> Barnett, W. S., et al. (2012). The State of Preschool: 2012 State Preschool Yearbook. The National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers University. Available at: <http://nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/yearbook2012.pdf>.

- (b) High-quality professional development for all staff;
- (c) A staff-child ratio of no more than 1:10;
- (d) A class size of no more than 20;
- (e) A full-day program;
- (f) Full inclusion of children with disabilities;
- (g) Developmentally appropriate, evidence-based curricula and learning environments that are aligned with the State Early Learning and Development Standards, for at least the year prior to kindergarten entry;
- (h) Individualized accommodations and supports so that all children can access and participate fully in learning activities;
- (i) Instructional staff salaries comparable to kindergarten through grade twelve teaching staff;
- (j) Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement;
- (k) Onsite or accessible comprehensive services for children; and
- (l) Evidence-based health and safety standards.

Kindergarten Entry Assessment means an assessment that—

- (a) Is administered to children during the first few months of their admission into kindergarten;
- (b) Covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;
- (c) Is used in conformance with the recommendations of the National Research Council reports on early childhood; and
- (d) Is valid and reliable for its intended purposes and for the target populations and aligned to the Early Learning and Development Standards.

Results of the assessment should be used to inform efforts to close the school-readiness gap at kindergarten entry, to inform instruction in the early elementary school grades, and to inform parents about their children's status and involve them in decisions about their children's education. This assessment must not be used to prevent children's entry into kindergarten or as a single measure for high-stakes decisions.

Lead Agency means the State-level agency designated by the Governor for the administration of the Preschool Development grant; this agency is the fiscal agent for the grant.

Local Educational Agency (LEA) has the meaning given the term in section 9101 of the ESEA.

Measures of Environmental Quality means valid and reliable indicators of the overall quality of the early learning environment.

Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions means the measures obtained through valid and reliable processes for observing how teachers and caregivers interact with children, where such processes are designed to promote child learning and to identify strengths of and areas for improvement for early learning professionals.

Program Standards means the standards that serve as the basis for a TQRIS and define differentiated levels of quality for Early Learning and Development Programs. Program Standards are expressed, at a minimum, by the extent to which—

- (a) Early Learning and Development Standards are implemented through evidence-based activities, interventions, or curricula that are appropriate for each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers;
- (b) Comprehensive Early Learning Assessment Systems are used routinely and appropriately to improve instruction and enhance program quality by providing robust and coherent evidence of—
  - (1) Children’s learning and development outcomes; and
  - (2) Program performance;
- (c) A qualified workforce improves young children’s health, social, emotional, and educational outcomes;
- (d) Culturally and linguistically responsive strategies are successfully used to engage families, help them build protective factors, and strengthen their capacity to support their children’s development and learning. These strategies may include, but are not limited to, parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports, adult and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development;
- (e) Health promotion practices include health and safety requirements; developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow up; and the promotion of physical activity, healthy eating habits, oral health and behavioral health, and health literacy among parents; and
- (f) Effective data practices include gathering Essential Data Elements and entering them into the State’s Statewide Longitudinal Data System or other early learning data system, using these data to guide instruction and program improvement, and making this information readily available to families.

Screening Measures means age and developmentally appropriate, valid, and reliable instruments that are used to identify children who may need follow-up services to address developmental, learning, or health needs in, at a minimum, the areas of physical health, behavioral health, oral health, child development, vision, and hearing.

State means any of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

State-Funded Preschool Program means a State-based, publicly funded preschool program that provides services to four-year-old children, including a State-funded Head Start program.

Statewide Longitudinal Data System means the State’s longitudinal education data system that collects and maintains detailed, high-quality, student- and staff-level data that are linked across entities and that over time provide a complete academic and

performance history for each student. The Statewide Longitudinal Data System is typically housed within the State educational agency but includes or can be connected to early childhood, postsecondary, and labor data.

Subgrantee means an Early Learning Provider serving a High-Need Community or Communities that is receiving a subgrant from the State and is participating in the State's ambitious and achievable plan.

Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) means the system through which the State uses a set of progressively higher Program Standards to evaluate the quality of an Early Learning and Development Program and to support program improvement. A Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System consists of four components:

- (a) Tiered Program Standards with multiple rating categories that clearly and meaningfully differentiate program quality levels;
- (b) Monitoring to evaluate program quality based on the Program Standards;
- (c) Supports to help programs meet progressively higher standards (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial support); and
- (d) Program quality ratings that are publicly available and include a process for validating the system.